

Programme Specification

BA English Literature and Politics

For students entering Part 1 in September 2027

UCAS Code: LQ23

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This document sets out key information about your Programme and forms part of your Terms and Conditions with the University of Reading.

Awarding Institution	University of Reading
Teaching Institution	University of Reading
Length of Programme	3 years
Length of Programme with placement/year abroad	BA English Literature and Politics with Placement Experience - 4 years (internal transfer only) BA English Literature and Politics with Year Abroad - 4 years (internal transfer only)
Accreditation	N/A
QAA Subject Benchmarking Group	English; Politics and International Relations

Programme information and content

This programme provides you with the tools to understand political, cultural and social processes over time and in a global context. You will have the opportunity to study a wide variety of literary texts from different places and written in different historical periods. The Politics programme will provide you with the tools to understand and assess how political processes shape our lives. You will study the dynamics of political decision-making, and explore how the global context influences national politics. You will have the opportunity to consider different methods of critical analysis and you will develop your skills in close reading and interpretation. You will be supported as you develop your own writing skills. Throughout the programme you will connect the academic study of politics to contemporary issues, such as climate change and populism.

Interactive small group teaching is central to the programme. Through discussion and debate, you will deepen your understanding of the political world and gain an appreciation of the complex and contested nature of political problems. As you move through the programme you will become an increasingly independent learner. You will acquire the tools you need to analyse how societies are and should be governed. You will learn how to interpret data and evidence from diverse sources, to develop persuasive arguments, and to communicate them effectively. As a graduate in English Literature, you will have the skills you need to express your ideas and opinions more clearly. The knowledge and skills you gain will prepare you for careers within the commercial and charitable sectors, as well as roles in areas such as government and the civil service.

Part 1:	At Part 1, you will study central concepts and theories in government and political theory, as well as their application to major issues facing contemporary societies, such as climate change or challenges to
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	democracy. Your English Literature modules will consider major literary genres (poetry, prose fiction and drama) as well as lesser well-known and newer forms, with examples taken from the Middle Ages to the present.
Part 2:	At Part 2, you will build on the foundations established at Part 1, extending your knowledge within government or political theory. You will receive skills-based training to enable you to evaluate existing research in politics, and to conduct original research. You will also have the opportunity to select a specialist optional module offered by both departments. Your English Literature modules allow you to investigate literature from different historical periods in more detail. We consider the theoretical issues that these texts raise and how our interpretation of them can help us to understand our own cultural moment better.
Placement/Study abroad year:	Professional Placement Year and Study Abroad opportunities are available between Parts 2 and 3.
Part 3:	At Part 3, you will choose from a range of research-led modules reflecting the expertise of members of staff, allowing you to tailor your curriculum to develop your knowledge, to specialise within particular areas and to deepen your understanding in line with your own interests. You will also have the option to complete your own independent research project under the guidance of a dedicated individual supervisor in one or other of the two Departments.

Programme Learning Outcomes - BA English Literature and Politics

During the course of the Programme, you will have the opportunity to develop a range of skills, knowledge and attributes (known as learning outcomes) For this programme, these are:

	Learning outcomes
1	To demonstrate broad, deep, and coherent knowledge of English literature in its principal modes and genres: across poetry, prose, and drama; covering a range of historical periods; and comprehending the regional variety and global reach of the English language
2	To apply discipline-specific practices of close reading, interpretative analysis and critical argument
3	To distinguish and evaluate different research methods, themes, and theoretical debates in current literary studies
4	To undertake autonomous learning, enquiry and research within the discipline of English literature, applying your mastery of relevant knowledge, skills and methods
5	To discuss and appraise published research, or equivalent advanced scholarship, within the field of English literature
6	To articulate your own and other people's ideas concisely, accurately, and clear
7	To describe, compare and analyse political systems within different countries.
8	To think critically and independently about political events, ideas, and institutions, and identify potential solutions to questions of public and policy concern.

9	To understand and apply qualitative and quantitative data relating to political phenomena.
10	To formulate a research question independently in politics or English literature and, under supervision, use appropriate methods to address it.
11	To gather and synthesize complex information from a wide range of primary and secondary data sources
12	To plan and manage your own time effectively in order to prioritise and complete a series of tasks.

You will be expected to engage in learning activities to achieve these Programme learning outcomes. Assessment of your modules will reflect these learning outcomes and test how far you have met the requirements for your degree.

To pass the Programme, you will be required to meet the progression or accreditation and award criteria set out below.

In addition to the learning outcomes stated above if you are on a placement or study abroad programme you will have the opportunity to develop the following learning outcome:

Additional Learning outcomes	
Study Abroad	
By the end of the Study Abroad Programme, students will have adapted to international study contexts in order to achieve the required academic outcomes determined by the host institution.	
Placement	
By the end of the Placement Year Programme, students will have explored and developed their professional experience, skills and knowledge, contributing significantly towards their continuous learning and career prospects as graduates.	

Module information

Each part comprises 120 credits, allocated across a range of compulsory and optional modules as shown below. Compulsory modules are listed.

Part 1 Modules:

Module	Name	Credits	Level
EN1PE	Poetry in English	20	4
EN1TPW	Theories and Practice of Writing	20	4
PO1ICD	Introduction to Contemporary Democracy	20	4
PO1IPI	Introduction to Political Ideas	20	4
PO1PCC	Politics of Climate Change	20	4

The remaining credits will be made up of optional modules available in the Department of English Literature.

Part 2 Modules:

Module	Name	Credits	Level
PO2SOP	The Study of Politics	20	5

The remaining credits will be made up of optional modules available in the Department of English Literature and the Department of Politics and International Relations. Students must take 60 credits of modules from the Department of English Literature and 60 credits of modules from the Department of Politics and International Relations.

Students must take at least one module from a list of up to 4 modules covering historical periods before 1900, as specified by the department.

Students must take at least ONE of PO2PHC or PO2CGP.

Up to 20 credits may be replaced by modules from an approved list.

Modules during a placement year or study year (if applicable):

Students on one of the 4-year programmes will take one 120 credit module in either Work Experience or Study Abroad. Students may be permitted to undertake a placement year or a study abroad year between Part 2 and Part 3 of the programme. In such cases students will transfer to a 4-year programme. The placement or study abroad year should not normally be shorter than nine months full-time

If you take a year-long placement or study abroad, Part 3 as described below may be subject to variation.

Part 3 Modules:

Students must select one 40 credit dissertation module.

Student must select 40 credits of optional modules available in the Department of English Literature.

Student must select 40 credits of optional modules available in the Department of Politics and International Relations.

Up to 20 credits may be replaced by modules from an approved list.

Placement opportunities**Placements:**

You may be provided with the opportunity to undertake a credit-bearing placement as part of your Programme. This will form all or part of an optional module. You will be required to find and secure a placement opportunity, with the support of the University

Study Abroad:

You may be provided with the opportunity to undertake a Study Abroad placement during your Programme. This is subject to you meeting academic conditions detailed in the Programme Handbook, including obtaining the relevant permissions from your School, and the availability of a suitable Study Abroad placement. If you undertake a Study Abroad placement, further arrangements will be discussed and agreed with you.

Optional modules:

The optional modules available can vary from year to year. An indicative list of the range of optional modules for your programme can be found online in the Course Catalogue. Details of optional modules for each part, including any additional costs associated with the optional modules, will be made available to you prior to the beginning of the Part in which they are to be taken and you will be given an opportunity to express interest in the optional modules that you would like to take. Entry to optional modules will be at the discretion of the University and subject to availability and may be subject to pre-requisites, such as completion of another module. Although the University tries to ensure you are able to take the optional modules in which you have expressed interest this cannot be guaranteed.

Teaching and learning delivery:

In Politics, you will be taught primarily through a combination of lectures and seminars. Small-group teaching is central to each stage of the programme, and all modules will include some seminar sessions in which you develop your knowledge through discussion and group exercises. At Part 1, this small-group teaching is supported by larger lectures. Lectures will introduce you to a topic and provide a framework to enable you to engage successfully with seminar activities. More generally, students start developing their capacity as independent learners and acquire skills specific to the study of Politics and Literature.

At Parts 2 and 3, there is less reliance on large lectures, with modules typically including more and longer seminars. Students are also introduced to other forms of teaching such as PC labs, simulation exercises and practical activities. There is a greater emphasis on small-group discussion at Part 2, but material to help you familiarise yourself with the subject knowledge for each module will be provided in live lectures and in asynchronous recorded content.

At Part 3, students are treated as independent learners, and so will on occasion be expected to prepare for detailed discussion of and engagement with complex material in small groups without the detailed scaffolding provided by lectures. In Part 3 you will choose the modules that best reflect your interests. You will have the opportunity to do a dissertation. While students will be guided by a supervisor who will help focus their project, identify appropriate methods and material, and comment on work, you will select and investigate your chosen question yourself. Across your three years of study, you will be assessed by traditional coursework essays, but you may be asked to do assessed presentations, develop learning journals, and undertake research projects.

Elements of your programme will be delivered via digital technology.

The scheduled teaching and learning activity hours and amount of technology enhanced learning activity for your programme will depend upon your module combination. In

addition, you will undertake some self-scheduled teaching and learning activities, designed by and/or involving staff, which give some flexibility for you to choose when to complete them. You will also be expected to undertake guided independent study. Information about module study hours including contact hours and the amount of independent study which a student is normally expected to undertake for a module is indicated in the relevant module description.

Accreditation details

N/A

Assessment

The programme will be assessed through a combination of written examinations, coursework (including class tests) and oral examinations. Further information is contained in the individual module descriptions.

Progression

Part 1

To achieve a threshold performance at Part 1, a student will normally be required to:

- (i) Obtain an overall weighted average of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 1; and
- (ii) Obtain a mark of at least 40% in individual modules amounting to not less than 80 credits taken in Part 1; and
- (iii) Obtain marks of at least 30% in modules amounting to 120 credits. (A Fail in a Pass/Fail module will be treated as not meeting the minimum threshold requirement for progression or classification. Pass/fail modules are excluded from weighted average calculations but must be passed to avoid failure of the Part or degree.)

In order to progress from Part 1 to Part 2, a student must achieve a threshold performance.

The achievement of a threshold performance at Part 1 qualifies a student for a Certificate of Higher Education if they leave the University before completing the subsequent Part.

Students considering transferring to another programme should seek guidance from their designated Support Centre in the first instance.

Part 2

To achieve a threshold performance at Part 2, a student shall normally be required to:

- (i) Obtain a weighted average of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 2; and
- (ii) Obtain marks of at least 40% in individual modules amounting to at least 80 credits taken in Part 2; and
- (iii) Obtain marks of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to at least 120 credits. (A Fail in a Pass/Fail module will be treated as not meeting the minimum threshold requirement for progression or classification. Pass/fail modules are excluded from weighted average calculations but must be passed to avoid failure of the Part or degree.)

In order to progress from Part 2 to Part 3, a student must achieve a threshold performance.

The achievement of a threshold performance at Part 2 qualifies a student for a Diploma of Higher Education if they leave the University before completing the subsequent Part.

Professional/placement year

Students are required to pass the professional placement year/study abroad year in order to progress on the programme which incorporates the professional placement year/study abroad year. Students who fail the professional placement year/study abroad year transfer to the non-placement year version of the programme.

Classification

Bachelors' degrees

The University's honours classification scheme is based on the following:

Mark Interpretation

70% - 100% First class

60% - 69% Upper Second class

50% - 59% Lower Second class

40% - 49% Third class

35% - 39% Below Honours Standard

0% - 34% Fail

The weighting of the Parts/Years in the calculation of the degree classification is:

Three year programmes:

Part 2: one-third

Part 3: two-thirds

Four year programmes, including Study abroad / Placement year

Part 2: one-third

Study abroad / Placement year: not included in the classification

Part 3: two-thirds

Details of the classification method is given in detail in the [Assessment Handbook](#) under:

- Section 17: Awards (Bachelor's), or
- Section 18: Awards (Integrated Master's programmes). Students who do not progress to Part 4 of the Integrated Master's will normally be subject to the method detailed under Section 17: Awards (Bachelor's)

Please note that there may be a specific version of the above for your year of entry.

Additional costs of the programme

During your programme of study you will incur some additional costs.

A range of resources to support your curriculum, including textbooks and electronic resources, are available through the library, but you will need to purchase some materials for private study. We recommend that you budget between £300 per year for purchasing books. Some books may be available second-hand, which will reduce costs.

Reading lists and module-specific costs are listed on the individual module descriptions. Some optional modules may involve additional costs for fieldtrips or travel to work placements. You will be advised of these costs before you enrol on the module.

If you take part in Study Abroad you should expect to pay for services which you would normally expect to pay for at Reading e.g. housing, food, travel, social activities, etc. Additional costs will vary depending on the host institution and location. Please see the Study Abroad website for further details.

Costs are indicative and may vary according to optional modules chosen and are subject to inflation and other price fluctuations. Estimates were calculated in 2026.

Students may consider purchasing a laptop to help support their learning. Information on recommended device specifications can be found on the [DTS Student Hub](#).

For further information about your Programme please refer to the Programme Handbook and the relevant module descriptions, which are available at <http://www.reading.ac.uk/module/>. The Programme Handbook and the relevant module descriptions do not form part of your Terms and Conditions with the University of Reading.

BA English Literature and Politics for students entering Part 1 in session 2027/28
2 July 2026

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